

TORCH RELAY

Relay highlights innovation and frugal approach

By SUN XIAOCHEN

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Olympic torch relays have covered the globe but none have reached the realms the 2014 Nanjing Youth Olympic Games' 'run' has entered. Boasting a creative online relay through an app, the Nanjing Youth Olympics has adopted a modern way to take the Olympic flame, which originated at the Panathenaic Stadium in Athens on April 30, to cyberspace.

The online relay took place through the Virtual Torch Relay app, on which registered users played roles as torchbearers and passed on the flame to another receiver by clicking and shaking their smartphones with the app.

The online relay had been going since the actual flame was lit and was followed by a short period of actual relay, which was held along city attraction routes in Nanjing on Aug 6-8. The flame will be carried to the main stadium to light the cauldron at the end of the opening ceremony on Aug 16.

As of Tuesday, more than 100 million computer jockeys took part in the online relay, which included 204 countries and regions over 108 days.

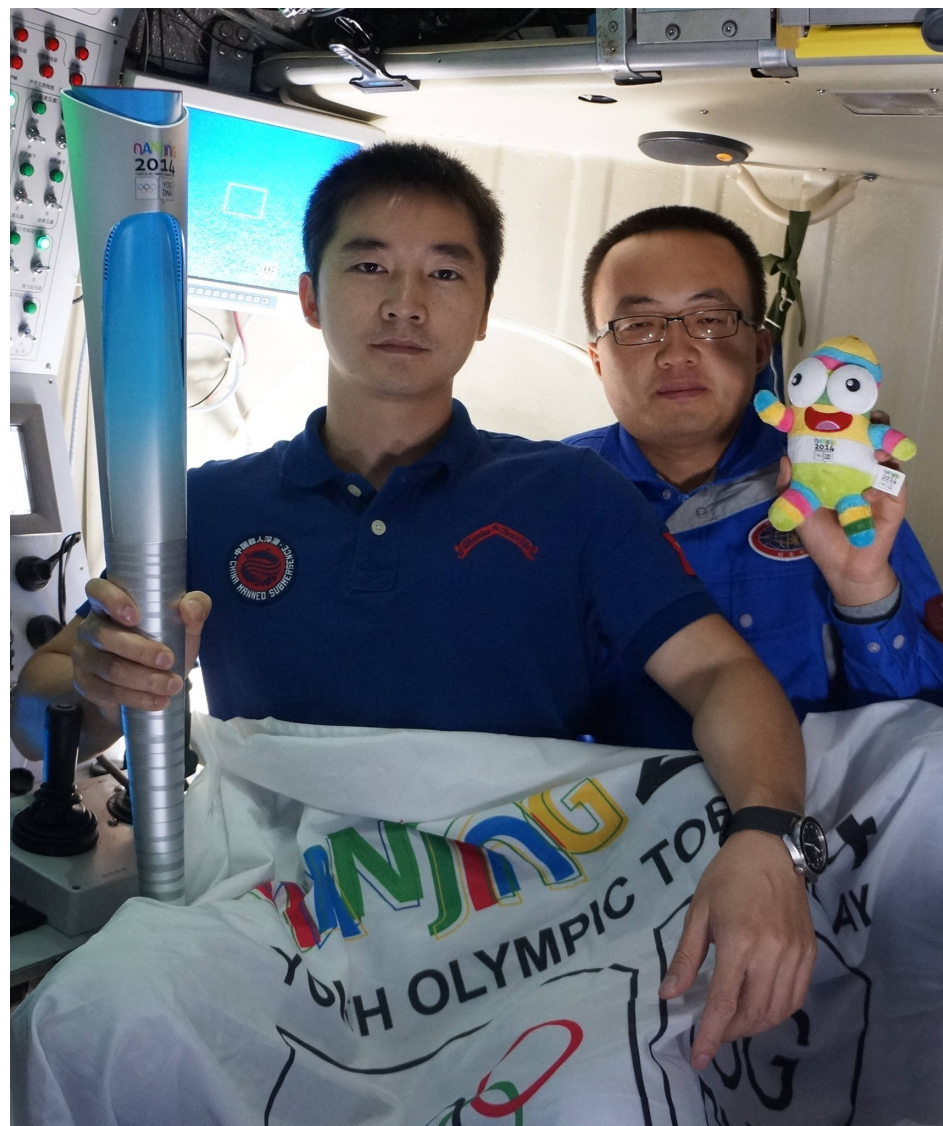
"The online torch relay is a great innovation. It's fun and better caters to young

people's need for online socializing in the digital era," said Xu Ning, director of the Nanjing government information office.

"It's also an economical and frugal way to host the relay. The Internet relay involves as many people from different countries as possible regardless of geographical barriers," Xu said.

Qi Lu, vice secretary-general of the Nanjing Youth Olympic Games Organizing Committee, said the initiative echoes the International Olympic Committee's call for sustainable and frugal Games.

"Passing on the Olympic flame in cyberspace is more effective and less expensive to promote the Olympic spirit, educate youngsters and share the excitement on the largest possible scale," Qi said at the 10-day countdown celebration of the event.



The crew of China's deep-sea submersible *Jiaolong* display the torch, flag and mascot of the Youth Olympic Games. PHOTO BY XINHUA

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TORCH HIGHLIGHTS

Virtual torch relay app popular around the world

Featuring an interactive visual experience of the torch relay, themed games and online socializing, the app offers users around the world the access to embark on the journey with the Olympic flame in cyberspace.

Users can download the app on the Games' official website to their PCs, iOS and Android devices, and register as an online torchbearer.

The most innovative function of the app is the simulated torch relay move between users, who could pass the virtual flame to another receiver nearby with a click and a shake of the device through the function named "Give Me Fire".

The app also features a pedometer to encourage youngsters to exercise more. Three games — cycling, poker and spot the differences — were pre-installed in the app so that users can be amused in

their spare time. Users can share their torch relay journey and games scores on social network websites through the app.



Taekwondo Olympic champion Wu Jingyu (left) joins in the actual torch relay in Nanjing on Tuesday.

PHOTO BY WEI XIAOHAO / CHINA DAILY

The actual Nanjing Youth Olympic Games torch

Known as the "Gate of Happiness", the real torch of the Nanjing event was designed by Vatti Corp

Ltd, the design company of the torches for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and the 2010 Guangzhou Asian Games.

The shape of the torch's top is designed to resemble the city gate of Nanjing, with bright blue colors going up the main body and passing through the gate-like metallic silver wrap, symbolizing the tranquility of Nanjing, an ancient Chinese city rich in tradition.

A stripe pattern on the handle symbolizes the water waves of the Yangtze River, which seems to murmur the folklore and legends of this riverside city.

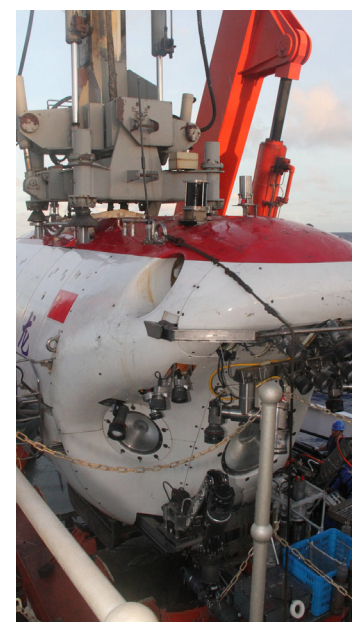
After repeated experiments and research, Vatti succeeded in developing the "Gate of Happiness", with its combustion capable of resisting a maximum wind speed of 11 meters per second; maximum rainfall of 50 milliliters an hour; an altitude of 4,500 meters and temperatures ranging from -15 C to 45 C.

Up to the moon, down the ocean

The virtual relay has allowed the torch to reach places that otherwise would not be possible.

Xu Guanlan, a student at the Nanjing No 3 Middle School, proposed sending an image of the torch to the Chang'e-3 lunar probe. The idea was realized on June 19 after the probe successfully landed on the moon and sent the image back to the Beijing Aerospace Control Center in about 20 minutes. The torch image was taken along a 760,000-kilometer journey between Earth and the moon during the period.

The signal of the online torch relay was also transmitted to the scientific research station at the South Pole on May 28 before the actual torch was carried 5,555 meters down the Pacific Ocean by *Jiaolong*, China's first manned deep-sea submersible on July 19.



Jiaolong carried the Youth Olympics torch deep into the Pacific Ocean. It reached a depth of 5,555 meters. PHOTO BY XINHUA